

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 131453

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DRAFTED BY EA/K:DLRANARD:DPW

APPROVED BY EA/K:DLRANARD

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 131453

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, PINT, KS, US

SUBJECT:KOREAN DEMAND FOR RETURN OF HENDERSON COLLECTION

1. AT LUNCH JUNE 19 RANARD TOLD ROK EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR KIM TAE ZHEE HE REGRETTED SEEING CHARGES AGAINST HENDERSON BEING WASHED IN PUBLIC, AND PARTICULARLY EMPHASIS PLACED ON HENDERSON'S INVOLVEMENT AS FORMER FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER AND CULTURAL ATTACHE. IF ITEMS WERE IN FACT IMPROPERLY EXPORTED AND ROK WAS GENUINELY INTERESTED IN OBTAINING THEIR RETURN, RANARD THOUGHT THAT MORE APPROPRIATE WAY TO RESOLVE MATTERS WOULD BE THROUGH DIRECT NEGOTIATION WITH HENDERSON. MANNER IN WHICH CHARGES BEING MADE PUBLIC AT THIS TIME THROUGH PRESS CONFERENCE AND RASH ALLEGATIONS WOULD ONLY LEAD TO CONCLUSION THEY WERE POLITICALLY INSPIRED TO INTIMIDATE A CRITIC ON KOREAN GOVERNMENT. RANARD THOUGHT THAT FALLOFF FROM THIS INCIDENT LIKELY TO RUB OFF MORE ON ROK AND BILATERAL RELATIONS THAN ON HENDERSON. HE SPECULATED CHARGES WOULD SOON BE INCLUDED IN NORTH KOREAN PROPAGANDA, AND HE WONDERED HOW THIS COULD IN ANY WAY BE USEFUL TO ROK IMAGE.

2. KIM TAE ZHEE WAS NOT FULLY AWARE OF ROK DEVELOPMENTS BUT STATED HE WOULD REPORT OUR VIEWS. KISSINGER

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